

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 OMB-01

SAJ-01 SAM-01 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 XMB-04 /080 W

----- 083841

R 010945Z MAR 76 ZDK  
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
TO SECSTATE WAHSDC 4685  
INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
CINCPAC

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 0975

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR SN VN

SUBJECT: GOS DEFIES HANOI

1. GOS LOST NO TIME IN REPLYING TO NORTH VIETNAM'S  
APPEAL (CONTAINED IN ARTICLE IN NHAN DAN) TO UNDERGROUND  
GROUPS THROUGHOUT SEA TO STEP UP THE FIGHT TO OVERTHROW  
THE NON-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS IN THE REGION. IN A SPEECH  
DELIVERED IN HIS CONSTITUENCY FEBRUARY 29, FOREIGN  
MINISTER RAJARATNAM WARNED THAT ASEAN NATIONS WERE NOW  
FACED WITH A NEW CONFRONTATION FROM THE NORTH. IT WAS  
NECESSARY FOR THE FIVE ASEAN NATIONS TO PREVENT THIS  
CONFRONTATION. HE SAID "AS LONG AS WE ARE STRONG  
INTERNALLY, NO AMOUNT OF CONFRONTATION CAN DESTROY THE  
ASEAN COUNTRIES."

2. AS QUOTED IN THE STRAITS TIMES, RAJA SAID "INDOCHINA  
CAN CHOOSE TO BE COMMUNIST, BUT WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE  
NON-COMMUNIST. DON'T INTERFERE WITH US." HE SAID  
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ASEAN WAS NOT AFRAID OF THE COMMUNISTS -- "IF THEY WANT

TO DESTROY US, WE ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO PREVENT SUCH A DESTRUCTION." HE STRESSED THAT ASEAN WAS NOT AGAINST INDOCHINA AND WANTED TO COEXIST PEACEFULLY WITH ITS NEIGHBORS. "THE MAIN PROBLEM NOW IS HOW CAN SOUTHEAST ASIA LIVE WITH SOUTHEAST ASIA." RAJA OBSERVED " WE WANT TO BE NON-COMMUNIST AND COMPETE WITH INDOCHINA TO SEE WHO CAN GIVE THE PEOPLE A BETTER LIFE." HE ALSO WARNED INDOCHINA NOT TO INTERFERE WITH ASEAN'S CONCEPT OF SOUTHEAST ASIA AS A ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY.

3. NEW NATION EDITORIAL MARCH 1 ASSERTED THAT NORTH VIETNAM HAD THROWN THE GUANTLET AT THE FEET OF ASEAN, BUT FOUND ITS PLEDGE OF FULL SUPPORT TO COMMUNIST INSURGENTS TO CONSTITUTE AN "ACT OF DISMAY" OVER THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THE ASEAN SUMMIT. THE NEW NATION NOTED RAJARATNAM'S STRONG REJOINDER, BUT STRESSED THAT IF THERE HAD TO BE COMPETITION, IT SHOULD BE A FRIENDLY COMPETITION TO SEE WHICH IDEOLOGY COULD MORE EFFECTIVELY DELIVER THE GOODS. THE EDITORIAL ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE U.S MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND AND THE PHILIPPINES DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A THREAT TO INDOCHINA, AND THAT IT IS HANOI'S BELLIGERENT POSTURE ITSELF THAT HELPS TO JUSTIFY THE CONTINUATION OF FOREIGN BASES. EDOTORIAL HOPEFULLY CONLUDED THAT HANOI'S FEARSOME NOISES WOULD SPUR ASEAN COUNTRIES TO GREATER EFFORT AT ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND TO CORRECT THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMBALANCES AND INJUSTICES WITHIN THEIR BORDERS, THUS MAKING ASEAN IMMUNE TO HANOI'S THREAT. HOLDRIDGE

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## Message Attributes

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